

AUTHENTIC MEMOIRS
OF
William Wynne Ryland,

CONTAINING

A succinct Account of the LIFE and
Transactions of that great but unfor-
tunate Artist.

WITH

Moderate and impartial Conjectures, of what
might most probably be the Cause of his de-
viating from the Line of Prudence and In-
tegrity,

To which is added

His TRIAL,
A LETTER to Mr. *Donaldson*,
And an Account of his Behaviour at the Place
of Execution.

*Learn to be wise from others' Harm,
And you shall do full well.*

Motto to *George Barnwell*,

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. RYALL, No. 17, *Lombard-street*.

M, DCC, LXXXIV.



A N

IMPARTIAL and GENUINE
HISTORY, &c.

TO trace the various actions of human life to their source, is beyond human reason: each mind has its own bias; and what motive is the cause of action, lies solely in the breast of each individual.

Conjecture is but uncertainty, at the best: we cannot see into the mind of man; therefore words and appearances are all we have to go by, and by which we are ever liable to be deceived.

Poverty is the child of Misfortune; and when that runs into error, Pity is the constant attendant; yet the laws of society must be satisfied for the general good.

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The various stimulatives to evil actions proceed from different causes: Vice is a tempting harlot, and captivates the unthinking by many ways; the gaming-table and the brothel have brought many to a fatal end: the apparent cause takes away that pity which would naturally follow the ignominious death of a fellow creature,

Ignorance, or low-breeding, find some excuse with the enlightened and benevolent; but when a person possessed of the most splendid gifts of Nature and Fortune, commits a crime against his understanding, and the laws of society, pity is turned into amazement, and Nature seems to be cruel to her most favorite child, by making him go retrograde to the principle she at first laid down for him. A tender parent, an affectionate husband, a capital artist, a mind capable of the most friendly sentiments, a favorite with his most gracious Sovereign and his amiable Consort; beloved, respected, regarded in a manner superior to the dignity of a title; such is the subject of the following narrative, of whom

whom we can only say, in the words of Hamlet, "O, what a falling-off is here!"

The unfortunate subject of this narrative is the eldest of seven sons belonging to Mr. Edward Ryland, formerly of the Old-Bailey, London, copper-plate printer; five of whom are now living. In justice to the memory of the late Mr. Ryland, we cannot help observing, that although his family were so numerous, he discharged the duty of a parent, by giving them a liberal education, and providing for them in such a manner, according to their different geniuses, so as to ensure them with care a comfortable subsistence in a genteel sphere of life: sorry are we to add, that some of them have since deviated from the maxims prescribed by their indulgent parent, which had they strictly adhered to, this narrative would never have made its appearance in public. An uncommon genius for drawing having very early discovered itself in Mr. William Wynne Ryland, who is the unfortunate subject of these pages; his father very prudently put him apprentice to

the justly-celebrated Mr. Ravenet, late of Lambeth-marsh, engraver, who soon discovered in his pupil a most uncommon taste for the polite arts, and which he endeavoured to cultivate with the greatest assiduity. During his apprenticeship, he signalized himself greatly as an artist; and, by some of his productions at that time, laid a foundation for his future fame. At the expiration of the time for which he was articled to Mr. Ravenet, he commenced business-for himself, with the highest reputation, both as an artist and gentleman. Shortly after, through the assistance of his worthy friend and godfather, the late Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, (after whom he was named) he set out on a tour through Europe, to complete his studies, in company with Mr. H——, a gentleman who now enjoys an independent fortune in the county of Cornwall, and Mr. Gabriel Smith, an engraver of distinguished abilities, now resident in London. This select party could not fail to be agreeable to each other, as they had been formerly school-fellows, and each enjoyed the same principles

ciples of religion, which are said to be of the Romish persuasion. During Mr. Ryland's residence in France, he worked under some of the best masters for improvement, where he considerably increased his reputation as an artist. At Paris he gave such convincing proofs of his great abilities, as to obtain him an honorary gold medal from the Society for the encouragement of Arts. Besides the great applause he gained by this mark of respect shewn him by the Parisian artists, this medal also entitled him to pursue his studies *gratis* at the Academy in Rome, which he afterwards did with universal approbation.

After a few years spent in improving his judgement in foreign Countries, he returned with the highest eclat to his native home, England; and introduced the present very fashionable and admired art of engraving in imitation of chalk drawings, which he has since practised with uncommon success. Shortly after his return to England, the demise of his late Majesty happening, and the ascending of his present Majesty to the throne,
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the appointment of engraver to his person was offered to the present celebrated Mr. Strange, which he declining on account of his political principles, Mr. Ryland succeeded, with an annexed salary of two hundred pounds per annum. He was now employed by his Majesty to engrave a whole-length figure of his person, from a very fine picture painted by Mr. Ramsay;* this he executed in so masterly a manner as gained him the highest esteem from his sovereign, and universal admiration from the public. After which he was employed also to engrave whole-length figures of the Queen, and Lord Bute, from the said admired Painter; which he executed with the same degree of perfection. In the year 1762 an unfortunate event happened in Mr. Ryland's family, which we would willingly draw a veil over; but the impartiality we wish to adhere to, through this narrative, obliges us to relate. A brother to the unfortunate gentleman who is the subject of these pages, re-

* Now in Guild-hall.

turning from a fox-hunt at Brentford, and appearing to be much inebriated, stopt a carriage, in which were two ladies, † whom he robbed of a few Shillings; an alarm being given, he was instantly pursued, and taken; for this offence he was tried at Croydon, convicted, and a day appointed for his execution: but on the morning of the fatal day, a respite was obtained from his Majesty, through the sole interest of that Gentleman, who is now so unhappily circumstanced himself. We now most earnestly recommend it to our readers, not to involve this unhappy family in more affliction, by any severe reflexions, on account of the above anecdote, the Gentle-

† This story is otherwise related, and if true, seems to be too much of a frolic to be punished with Death.

Mr. R——d being with some of his gay companions in Covent-garden, and having spent all their money, proposed to recruit their pockets, by making depredations on the road; this being unanimously agreed to, they tossed up which should be the first adventurer; when the lot fell upon R——d who was so near suffering for his temerity and folly.

fatal

man alluded to, having, ever since that unfortunate event, maintained an unblemished character, and now lives in the highest repute. The only apology we can make for the painful recital is, that we are actuated by no other motive, than shewing the extraordinary esteem the late unhappy Mr. Ryland was at that time held in, even by Majesty itself: the recollection of which, in a breast so fraught with humanity, as that of our most gracious Sovereign, we most fervently wished would have operated in favour of that unfortunate man.

We beg pardon of our readers for this digression, and shall now resume our narrative. Mr. Ryland was on the pinnacle of fame, admired and respected by all that knew him. Amongst the many capital productions of this artist, is an admired print, taken from a story in Plutarch, where a young gentleman is represented dying with love for his mother-in-law, an amiable young lady, and perfect beauty: a physician attending declares to the father, that nothing can save his son's life but the relinquishing

relinquishing to him his wife; which the
 fond parent, rather than lose his son, at
 length consents to. It is impossible to
 enumerate the various productions of this
 great artist; suffice it to say, that the more
 pieces he produced, the more he gained
 the admiration of the public. A few years
 since, Mr. Ryland being tired of a sedentary
 life, determined to embark in a more pub-
 lic line of business, and accordingly entered
 into partnership with a Mr. Bryer, and
 opened a very capital printshop opposite
 the Royal-Exchange in Cornhill, where
 they carried on a very extensive business a
 considerable time, which at length they
 were obliged to relinquish, through con-
 siderable losses in trade; and a statute of
 bankruptcy was awarded against them.
 After this, Mr. Ryland lived private some
 time at Pimlico, when he again com-
 menced shopkeeper in the Strand, which
 he soon after quitted, and retired to a private
 house at Knightsbridge, where he resided
 at the time of the late unfortunate event.

Mr. Ryland was about fifty-four years of age; had an amiable and indulgent wife, and six children, now living; four of whom are said to be in France; and a young lady about twenty-five years of age, a natural child, who, it is thought, will excel all her competitors in the polite art of Painting, is also said to be daughter to this unfortunate Gentleman.

After taking a retrospective view of the character of Mr. Ryland, from his infancy to the present year, we cannot meet with one vice to which he was addicted; on the contrary, his good sense, politeness, generosity, condescension, and great affability, had endeared him to all his acquaintance: when lo! on the 5th of April last, the following extraordinary advertisement appeared in all the public papers, to the astonishment of the whole kingdom.

“ A FORGERY.

“ Whereas WILLIAM WYNNE RYLAND
 “ stands charged before the Right Ho-
 “ nourable

“ honourable the Lord Mayor, on suspicion
 “ of feloniously and falsely making, forg-
 “ ing and counterfeiting an acceptance to
 “ two bills of exchange, for payment of
 “ 7114^l. and for publishing the same as
 “ true, well knowing them to have been
 “ so falsely made and counterfeited, with
 “ intent to cheat and defraud the United
 “ East-India-Company.

“ Whoever will apprehend, or cause the
 “ said WILLIAM WYNNE RYLAND to be
 “ apprehended, and delivered up to justice,
 “ shall receive a reward of Three Hundred
 “ Pounds, to be paid by Peter Michell,
 “ Esq; Secretary of the said Company,
 “ immediately after his being apprehended
 “ and delivered up to a magistrate.

“ The said William Wynne Ryland is
 “ an engraver, and formerly kept a print-
 “ shop in Cornhill, London, in partnership
 “ with Mr. Bryer, deceased. He has a
 “ house at Knightsbridge, which he left on
 “ Tuesday the 1st of April, instant, and
 “ was seen in London that day, about

“ 11 or 12 o’clock. He is about 50 years
 “ of age, about five feet nine inches high,
 “ wears a wig, with a club or queue, and
 “ his own hair turned over in front; a
 “ black complexion, thin face, with strong
 “ lines; his common countenance very
 “ grave, but whilst he speaks, rather
 “ smiling, and shews his teeth, and has
 “ great affability in his manner.”

2d April, 1783.

In consequence of the above advertisement, on the 15th of April information was given at the Public Office in Bow-street, of the place of his concealment; when two of Sir Sampson Wright’s men were instantly dispatched to a little house, near Stepney, to apprehend him: on their entering the room he immediately cut his throat, in a most shocking manner, with a razor which lay near him on the table; a surgeon was instantly sent for, who closed the wound; but, from the loss of blood, he was incapable of being removed that night; and a guard was accordingly placed over him in the house.

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On the morning following, Mr. Ryland was brought from Stepney; to the Public-Office in Bow-street, when, after a short examination, he was committed to Tothill-fields Bridewell; the surgeon who dressed his wound declaring it not dangerous.

The extraordinary manner in which Mr. Ryland was discovered, claims particular notice in this narrative. Mr. Ryland, having disguised himself in an old brown coat, with a green apron, and worsted nightcap, and assuming the name of Jackson, took lodgings, as before observed, in a little house, near Stepney.

In this house a cobbler and his wife lodged on the ground-floor. The seam in the back of one of Ryland's shoes being burst out, he had the cobbler up stairs to mend it. The cobbler said, he must have the shoe away with him; to which Ryland objected, and said he had better make him a new pair. Then, said the cobbler, I must have your shoe with me: Ryland declined letting him have the shoe;
and

and when the cobbler was gone, he pasted a bit of paper on the mark of his own name, which was stamped, and sent him the shoe. The cobbler's curiosity, and also that of his wife, being raised to see the name, they examined; and finding it to be Ryland, and having observed the thief-takers to be much about in that neighbourhood, their suspicions were confirmed beyond a doubt; and the wife took a coach to the India-house. She then acquainted the Secretary with her business, and required a promissory note for £300. fearing the money might otherwise be divided amongst other claimants. She then drove to Bow-street, and returned home with two of Sir Sampson Wright's men, as before related.

On Friday, June 6th, the Grand Jury at Hicks's-Hall found a true bill against Mr. William Wynne Ryland, for forgery on the East-India Company, when Mr. Ryland petitioned the Court then sitting at the Old-Bailey to defer his tryal to the following

following Sessions, which was complied with.

On Wednesday July 23, the Sessions again commenced at the Old-Bailey, and the trial of Mr. Ryland came on the Saturday following, July 27th; on the morning of which, he was removed from Tothill-fields Bridewell, to Newgate.

As this trial has excited the curiosity of the public, to an extraordinary degree, we shall now lay before our readers an impartial detail thereof, together with the Prisoner's defence.

T R I A L

O F

MR. WILLIAM WYNNE RYLAND.

IN the indictment were eight counts; four of which were for forgery, two for uttering with an intent to defraud the East-India Company, and two with intent to

to defraud the parties to whom the bill was tendered.

The bill charged to be forged was a bill of exchange, drawn at Fort St. George, in the East-Indies, by John Smith and Hector Munro, payable to Captain Dugald Campbell, or order, either twelve or twenty four months after sight, in option of the Court of Directors, for 510 pagoda's, bearing five per cent interest. It was accepted by Richard Holt, by order of the Court, at twelve months.

The Prisoner pleading not guilty,—Mr. Rose opened the evidence on the part of the Crown, by declaring how unpleasing a task it was on his part to state to the Court a business of the present nature. He should not say a word on the nature of the crime, but only remind the Jury, the sole object of their attention was the uttering, knowing it to be forged. He observed, the Presidents in India draw bills on the East-India Company, which bills they accept.

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The Prisoner discounted a real bill of this kind on the 19th of September, 1782: in November following, he published a forged bill, which was an exact copy of the other. He stated the mode of accepting bills at the India-House, and the various facts to be adduced in evidence, for the purpose of discriminating the forged bill from the true one. It would lie upon the Prisoner to shew how he came by the second bill: on the circumstances of the case therefore, it now rested on the Jury to determine.

William Moreland, a banker,—knows Mr. Ryland—had no transaction with him himself; but William Wilkinson, his clerk, had.

William Wilkinson.—On the 4th or 5th of November, Mr. Ryland offered his note to obtain money, with India bills, as a collateral security: he marked the notes, but not having marked the bills, he cannot swear that the bill now shewn him, was one of the bills which he took from him

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the numbers from; but there was one for £.210. dated April 28. He tied up the bills, but there is no mark of his on them. He put them in a box; cannot say whose custody the bills have been since in. He took five bills and marked the papers they were put in, but cannot say this bill is one of them. He delivered the five bills to one of the partners in the back shop; he thinks to Mr. Moreland.

Cross-examined.—He put the bills into a Box; the partners had access to the bills; he cannot account for them after he delivered them to the partner; he has known the prisoner four years; his character always has been unexceptionable.

Mr. Moreland, hearing of a forgery, took the five bills from Mr. Wilkinfon, and carried them to the India-house, to be examined: one of the directors took them, and gave them to a clerk, who carried them away. The bill now shown he cannot

not swear to be one of those, not having his mark on it.

Mr. Hamersly said, the initials on the bills produced are in his hand writing. He wrote them at the India-House on the 10th of April last, when he presented the Bill, which was refused. On his cross-examination said, from his transactions with Mr. Ryland, he always had reason to believe him a very honest man.

Archibald Cambell, had a bill remitted to him from a relation at Madrafs for £200. Mr. Munro got it discounted for him in April 1781. He endorsed that bill, and that bill only. He did not carry, but sent the bill to the India-House, where it was accepted. By inspection he cannot say which is his hand-writing, the indorsements of his name are so similar on both sides, but is positive he only accepted one. On his cross-examination only swears that his clerk brought him back an accepted bill.

George Munro received a bill from Cambell ; (*the two bills produced in court*) can ascertain the bill given to him, from one circumstance, which is, that the *ink sunk* when he wrote upon it. The words written by him were—of April £210. He delivered the bill to Mr. Crookshanks in May 1782. Had it from Mr. Cambell, and never had any other bill of the kind. On being cross-examined, said he received the bill in March, and parted with it in May 1782. About twelve months after Mr. Smith brought both bills to indentify them. If Mr. Smith had brought the bill which was *not blotted* he should have said, he believed it *was* his hand-writing ; swears positively to the recollection of the *sinking of the ink*. He wrote large, and deep, which might cause the sinking. Is positive he received from Cambell, the bill he delivered to Crookshank.

John Crookshank received a bill from Campbell for £.210 with interest at 5 per cent, in May, to get discounted. He received

ceived but one bill, but cannot swear it to be that now shewn him.

George Munro (again)—will not positively say, but the bill might have been out of his possession from March to May ; it might have been at his bankers three or four days, or for a week at a time.

John Goddard discounted a bill he received from Crookshank with Ryland ; it was for £.210—cannot identify the bill—never discounted any other bill on the East India Company. On his cross-examination, he said he had frequently discounted bills for Ryland ; his character is eminent for perfection and uprightness. He knows neither of the bills now in Court. Has proposed bills to Ryland for ten, seven, and four thousand pounds—always believed him honest and opulent.

R. Holt is certain he accepted but one bill of the tenor and date of that in question, but cannot say which of the bills it was. He had a written authority from the Court to
accept

accept bills on the 29th of August, 1781. The terms of acceptance were not written by him. Cannot swear to the *day* of acceptance, but the bill is one of those which lay for acceptance when he had the order given him. It is the custom of office to accept bills for the first court-day after they are left at the office: if left on a Monday, they are accepted on Wednesday. The acceptance in question is included in the order. He has sometimes accepted three hundred bills a day—thinks it impossible that he could accept two of the same tenor. When letters bring advice of bills, extracts are entered; the Director examines and refer to the Commissioners of Account, then hand the bills to them, read them twice, and they are checked by the Commissioners of Accounts. He is sometimes called away; but when it happens, he always locks up the bills in a drawer before he goes.

Cross-examined.—He has a pension of £.200 a year from the India Company, in consequence of a disorder in his *head*.

Bills are brought in numbers; they are brought in a kind of folio: the bills are lodged from him sometimes for Months, as where there is no advice. After acceptance, he puts the bills into a folio, to be delivered to the persons who shall call for them; they properly describing them, no matter who called, whether Johnny Nokes or any one else; they get the Bills. As he does not know which is the bill he *accepted*, he cannot *positively swear* that he accepted either of the bills now produced to him

In answer to the Court; he never accepted bills without particular orders. The red mark in the bill-book authorizes him to accept; it is made immediately before acceptance, as the bills are read over.

Homar, a clerk in the India-House, recollects a Bill brought in April, knows it to be the bill from N^o 97 being altered to 43, and from his having written "*this should be 43*"; which on one bill is in his manner of writing, on the other, not.

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He also knows it from having sewed it with a Number of other bills of the same class, through the word, company.

Court.—The other bills appear to have been sewed too.

He knows the bill he sewed, by the pin-holes in it corresponding with the pin-holes in the others. He measured the distances with compasses, they all agree. (*measured again in court*) is clear the words "*ninety seven should be forty three*" is his writing in one bill, *not* it the other.

Mr. Nightingale.—Mr. Ryland brought the bill to his House on the 19th of September 1782; knows the bill by the initials of his name W. N. and E. 19 upon the back. He indentified the bill.

Mr. Hamersly again.—He marked the bill, on its being rejected at the India-House.

James Southern.—The bill now shown him was put into his hands by Mr. Hamersly; he protested it for non payment, and

and it was marked by him I. S. 28th of April, 1783.

William Harris.—There are two letters on the bill, he *believes* are his writing. He believes Mr. Southern gave it him.

James Whatman.—The paper on which one of the bills is drawn, is of his manufactory. The mould on which the paper was made, was received by him on the 26th of February, 1780. The mould was not used till the end of December following. It was worked with till the 27th of April, 1781, having then made 958 reams. The first paper sent to London, made on this mould, was on the 27th of April, 1781. The paper of the bill was sent after; for at first the mould had received no injury: the second parcel of paper was not sent to London till May 3d, 1782; on part of which, he was certain, the bill was drawn. He shewed a sheet made on the mould when injured, and which had a defect; and shewed the same defect on the bill, observing, that the bill
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had a defect more than the sheet. The water marks are the same in both.

Mr. Homar, (*again*).—Is certain no other bill, except the two in question, was presented to the India-House. Only one bill was objected to. Neither of the bills in question were paid. No other bill of the same tenor was paid, nor lodged in the tin box at the East-India House.

Richard Freeman knew the Prisoner from the beginning of April, a room being taken for him in his house, and furnished by one Mr. Laurence. Mr. Ryland went by the name of Jackson : he sent a shoe down to be mended, on which was his name ; he could not read it, but his wife did : on which he gave information to the officers of justice.—Mrs. Freeman corroborated the evidence of her husband.—Mr. Baily went with the justices' people, to identify his person ; on entering the room, he heard a noise like the gurgling of water, and looking round, saw Mr. Ryland, with his throat cut, leaning over a white basin, bleeding.

Mr.

Mr. Nightingale declared he received the bill from Ryland on the 28th of April, 1783; it was refused at the India-house, because another bill, of the same tenor, had been paid that morning. He said, Mr. Ryland had done business at his house for several years, and he had so good an opinion of his honour, and abilities, that, had he applied for two hundred pounds, he would have lent it him, on his bare word.

The evidence being gone through, the Clerk of the Arraignment read Mr. Ryland's defence; which in substance is as follows:

That poverty, or knavery, were the parents of forgery; but he should be able to shew, that neither of those belonged to him: to support this, he stated that, when in partnership with Mr. Bryer, they had failed, and a commission of bankruptcy was taken out: there was a deficiency; but he, having acquired ability, paid all the creditors full twenty shillings in the pound; this circumstance he was forced to

urge ; and he hoped, what had long been the comfort, would now be the protector of his life.

Poverty was the only cause which could induce the crime he was charged with ; but he could convince the court, and jury, that, so far from being poor, he was really rich ; and, though a commission of bankruptcy had been taken out against him, he was amply able to pay twenty pounds for every twenty shillings claimed : his gracious Sovereign, who was the father of the arts, had conferred two hundred a year upon him ; he was a proprietor of shares in the Liverpool water-works, to the amount of seven thousand pounds ; his stock in trade was worth ten thousand pounds ; and the profits of his business produced two thousand pounds a year. He had, for years, carried on the business of a discounteer, without censure ; and in the course of this business, the bill charged to be forged, came into his hands : it was given to him by one Haggiston, for whom he discounted it, on the recommendation of a Mr. Lyd-
dias,

dias, an agent, from America, who appeared to be a man of business: he had no doubt but the bill was genuine; but supposing it to be forged, it was no wonder he should be imposed on, when the servants of the East-India Company could not discover the fraud: there had been no proof given of his having uttered this bill with a fraudulent intent: and his reasons for flying, he hoped would be satisfactory, as being natural; he had searched for Haggiston, for several days, without success; and not finding him, in compliance with the tears and intreaties of a fond wife, he had retired, till Haggiston could be found.

The attempt on his life had brought upon him the imputation of criminality; but as God had spared him to repent, he trusted that the Jury would follow the benign example; and that insanity would not be considered as guilt. 'Till now his character had stood unimpeached; they would not crush it by an evidence merely presumptive; in their hands he trusted with implicit confidence his character and
life:

life: they would not blast the one, or sacrifice the other, without substantial proofs.

After this, Mr. Peckham was going into particulars, but the Judge refused to hear evidence, except to general character. A great number of very respectable persons gave Mr. Ryland a very high character, in regard to his opulence and integrity; and Mr. Rorke deposed, that he knew Mr. Lydias to have been acquainted with Mr. Ryland, and to have had money transactions with him. Mr. Justice Buller then gave a clear and impartial charge to the Jury, who in about thirteen minutes brought in their verdict, **GUILTY** of uttering with an intent to defraud.

Mr. Ryland was dressed in a brown coat, white waistcoat, coloured silk stockings, and was without fetters: he appeared, during the trial, with the utmost composure, and heard the verdict pronounced with the utmost fortitude.

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The morning this unhappy man, yet great artist, was to set forward towards *that undiscover'd country, from whose bourn no traveller returns*, he appeared with the utmost composure, in the Press-Yard, and took leave of a few, but respectable acquaintance: and after the usual ceremony of those geniusses who are properly qualified in such sort of business, was over, he went towards the door, where a person, with a Stentorian voice, called out, *Mr. Ryland's coach!* with as much vociferation, and self-satisfaction, as if he was calling out at the Playhouse, where the trifling reward of two-pence would have amply rewarded him for the dignity he intended to confer.

I am sorry to think there are such wretched sort of beings in the world, who can make no distinction between the awful scene at one place, and strange hubbub, confusion, and dissipation, at the other: the one should be a lesson against vice, and every kind of immorality; the other considered as the school where these opposites are generally propagated.

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But to leave these reflections, and return to the subject——

Mr. Ryland, before he went into the coach which was to convey him to his *everlasting home*, with the tenderness of a father, took leave of a little girl, who was unconscious of what was intended. But those who pretend to have any knowledge of Mr. Ryland's affairs, do not hesitate to say it was a natural daughter. Far be it from the writer of this Narrative to make any reflection on Mr. Ryland's character from this trifling circumstance: he only shews, that, though a married man, he had some follies to combat against his virtues.

Having got into the fatal vehicle, he proceeded to the place of execution, amidst a croud of spectators which were hardly seen before. And, indeed, it might tax the memory of two ages at least to find a similar example, where one of the first artists in the world, favoured by his Sovereign, applauded by the best judges, and more particularly indulged by Fortune, made

made so great a mistake in his understanding, and came to be hanged.

Mr. Ryland at last arriving at the place of execution, though not at the desired port, waited rather longer than his fellows in sorrow wished to do. This is apprehended to be more owing to the indulgence of the Sheriffs, than any superior merit in the culprit, his crime being equal to the best or the worst of them.

But the horror of the scene cannot be described—The tremendous Author of all Things, at this awful period, bade his thunders to roll, his rain to descend, and his lightning to flash conviction on those who act contrary to the laws of GOD and MAN: the first is fixed in the breast of every man; and the latter must be from the same source, though a secondary means by which it binds society together.

The violence of the above-mentioned storm suspended the awful ceremony upwards of half an hour; during which time,

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Mr

Mr. Ryland, and his unhappy fellow-sufferers, remained in the coaches allotted for them ; while the miserable wretches who had no friends, were exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, in open carts. The storm having abated, the officers of Justice re-assumed their business, and the unfortunate objects who were doomed to suffer, were all tied up to the fatal tree, except Mr. Ryland, who yet remained in his carriage. After about half an hour, spent in prayer by his fellow-sufferers, the unfortunate Mr. Ryland ascended the cart, dressed in mourning, and still preserving the utmost fortitude ; taking hold of the rope himself by which he was pinioned with the utmost composure. The executioner having finished the previous necessary business of affixing the rope, the unhappy gentleman entered into conversation with the Rev. Mr. Vilette, for the space of ten minutes, during which time he preserved a serenity of countenance that astonished the numerous spectators ; after which he joined his fellow-sufferers in singing a loud hymn, imploring forgiveness

ness of that Deity they had so justly offended, by violating his most holy precepts: and now, having taken a most affectionate leave of each other, the caps were drawn over their faces, and the executioner had the whip in his hand, ready to give the fatal stroke which was to put a period to their existence, when he was stopped by the Sheriff (it is presumed, by the desire of Mr. Ryland), and a white handkerchief was taken from his pocket, and tied over his cap; which being done, they were instantly launched into eternity.

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ANECDOTES *of* Mr. RYLAND.

THOUGH many people have wondered how Mr. Ryland could make away with so large an income as he is said to have had, and justly imagined there must be some secret ways which he had art enough to conceal, the following may serve to set the matter beyond a doubt :

He took a young woman, by the consent of her parents, from the country, to be a companion to his wife, and assist her in the management and care of the children. This young body, whose name we are not possessed of, was esteemed a most agreeable person ; her face was remarkably beautiful. Such charms could not fail to make an impression on the heart of this Delineator of perfection : he soon made overtures to her, which were accompanied with something so prevailing, that she soon agreed to his amorous advances ; which in a short time began to be so visible, that her removal was thought necessary. An
apartment

apartment was provided for her in the most superb style ; and by her he had one child, if not more. This lady he was often with, and he supported her in the most expensive manner ; and she lived up to all his extravagance. One of these sort of connections was sufficient to help off with no inconsiderable sum yearly.

A few days before the discovery of the forgery he suffered for, he solicited an eminent banker (who had often lent him money) to lend him £4,000. on an *East India* bill for £10,000. No doubt but this bill was of the same fabric. Could he have prevailed on this gentleman's credulity, he would, in all probability, have concealed the discovery some years longer ; but the banker had shunned his company a considerable time ; though he often declared he knew no man whose company he preferred to Ryland's, had he not continually wanted to borrow money. Surprising his distress should always be so great, with so many advantages continually bestowed on him.

Capt:

Capt. Rouse having a desire to purchase two historical pictures, painted by the celebrated Mr. West, historical painter to the King, commissioned Mr. Ryland to purchase them of Mr. West, and agreed to pay him 20 per cent. on the sum he bought them at ; which not being a sufficient profit, he charged the Captain double the price he paid Mr. West, and received the full commission on the whole money.

The King told him, when a bankrupt, that if he acted as an honest man, his bounty should be continued ; which was accordingly done.

He solemnly declared ; that though he was charged with gaming, he never gamed, nor did he ever see an EO table but once.

The many fine plates he engraved is a confirmation of his industry. He worked great part of his time, while under confinement for the crime he suffered, and finding he could not live to finish engraving the plates in hand, he touched the proofs with

India-

India-ink, to enable his pupil to finish the engraving the better, for his widow and children.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. WILLIAM WYNNE RYLAND, who was executed on Friday, the 29th of August, 1783, to Mr. FRANCIS DONALDSON, of Liverpool, dated Cell in Newgate, Sunday the 24th of August.

My dear Friend,

BEFORE I quit my earthly habitation for ever, I said you should hear from me by letter. And as that fate is inevitably fixed, and not a gleam of merciful hope remains, I have calmly sat me down to execute my promise.

Oh, Frank, it is a dreadful situation indeed to be under the sentence of death to a fixed period of time. Life, in that case, becomes a wearisome burthen, and ancient
phi-

philosophy almost rises above modern nature. I could wish for instant annihilation, only that cool reflection gives time for the principles of religion to operate against that most wicked of all crimes, which madness once drove me to attempt. Now I shall meet the last executive vengeance of the law with fortitude. My mind is properly armed for the engagement; and you shall find that in me, a true sense of morality constitutes the only courage that can support a dying man.

The opinion of the world is now a trifle almost below consideration. Praise or calumny, a good name or a bad, are synonymous indifferences to me, because they cannot, after Friday next, affect the part which is immortal. The soul, secured in its existence, must then look with superiority over all terrestrial considerations, and bid defiance to envy, hatred, and malice. Believe me (and I have now no reason to tell an untruth) I wish this hour was the hour of my everlasting translation. The bright beams of an hereafter shine in
rays

rays of glory round my imagination, and I long to leave this earthly night of doubt, for the open day of a glorious certainty above.

Divorced from all sublunary ideas of happiness, and unfettered in my bosom, the sentiments of my heart flow pure and uncorrupted. You may believe them as genuine truths falling from the lips of a man who has but a few days to live. I wish you to cherish them in your recollection, and to inculcate them where you think they will ripen into serviceable fruit.

The crime for which I suffer is as dangerous an offence to this country, as any within the catalogue of legal interdictions. It strikes at the vital part of commerce, and carries with it a poison most deadly to public credit. It is a crime unpardonable, and therefore never sought mercy under the idea of Court interest. I looked for Royal favour through those circumstantial which indicated more the probability of innocence, than the certainty of guilt.

Par-

G

Partiality to myself might have more warmly painted the argument in support of pardon, than the guardians of the law did in considering from outward appearances, without any inward feeling. I do not arraign the gracious benevolence that has so long dignified the humanity of the British Crown. No—there Royalty receives constant lustre from the distribution of mercy; and there the tears of the Sovereign have always accompanied the warrant of death. I do not arraign the seat of judgment which pronounced my sentence, because justice acted against me, as it thought, for the best. I do not arraign my Jury, as I trust they possessed the purest principles of unbiaſſed men; and I have not aught to say against the witnesses—they, I am confident, swore as they thought.

The busy tongue of scandal ever takes opportunity to pick out all that is bad in the character of men in my unfortunate circumstance. Cold pity, in assistance, showers down her ejaculating sorrows for the sad catastrophe, and, by lamenting the
man,

man, extends the propagation of his supposed guilt. These, I have said, are matters of indifference to me, as to myself :—but I have, and I shall leave behind, those I love most dearly. They will feel every word that is said—each syllable respecting my fame must be a dagger or a balsam to their breast. O, my friend, do you therefore watch and guard my name from calumny, and shield my unfortunate relicts from the shame that must attend the mention of my fate. It is for them I am sensibly affected—and they only give me a pang at parting. Yes, thou beloved partner of my more happy days!—yes, my children, the man is conquered by the husband, and subdued in the father! The Philosopher shrinks from the moral Stoick; and at the remembrance of thy names, nature bursts through her armour of religious heroism, and simplifies what conjugal and parental feelings are!

When I look forward to Friday evening, and to that state in which my immortal part may be, what a world of imaginary wonders rises to my view! What doubts, what
uncer-

uncertainties do I experience! and yet the very reasoning on the subject is a conviction of its rectitude. Why have I these thoughts?—why am I endowed with such sensations?—and why do I ask these questions? Is there not something stronger than the breath of existence, than the mechanism of our bodies, to cause such thoughts—man else is no more than a worm, to which the instinct of Nature gives apprehension for its own preservation. Yes, my confidence and belief soar to another world; and even without the assistance of that great aid, the Gospel, they tell me, as Shakspeare finely expresses it, that “the divinity stirs within me, that Heaven
“itself points out an hereafter, and intimates eternity to man.” Atheistical arguers may say, that man, in the hour of his departure from life, is frightened into the hope of an hereafter; but I am calmly, coolly, deliberately, and to an incontrovertible certainty of opinion, that even the most logical reasoner of the whole tribe is of my way of thinking; and when he considers the power by which he is enabled to
argue

argue on causes and effects, the very arms he uses for defending his doctrine, are the weapons by which it is cut into annihilation.

As the world increases in years, so the children of men multiply in wickedness. Wealth creates ease, ease brings on luxury, luxury gives birth to extravagance, and extravagance is the parent of ruin. When the means are gone, methods are sought to recover them; and hence it is that guilt is not alone confined to inherent indigence, and birthright plebeianism. The great as often err as the little; but gold conceals many a crime that poverty discovers. I mention this as a remark that has struck me in reading the simple history of the world, and which may be of service, if considered properly. Our clergymen neglect the discussion of natural infirmities, for the difficult task of attempting to explain the inexplicable texts of Holy Writ. By this means, they lead men into doubts, fears, and apprehensions, that often drive weak minds to enthusiastic madness. We have examples by the hundred, and, what

is still more alarming, they encrease every day, under the very eye of the episcopal heads of the purest Church that ever yet was established.

Once more I recommend to your care and attention those I have left behind. May the blessings of Providence attend you through every stage of life, and may you never know a misfortune to give you any thing like that sensation which I now feel!

W. W. RYLAND.

FINIS.



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